NO/DAW/DP

16th January, 1981.

Reginald Parkhouse, Esq., J.P., Exeter Magistrates' Court, Heavitree Read, Exeter, EX1 2LF.

Dear Mr. Parkhouse,

Regina v. Spokes

Your decision to rule the book "Pornography or Art?", by Poul Gerhard, "obscene", in giving judgement in the recent case against Mr. Peter Spokes, together with copies of such magazines as "Mayfair", "Men Only" and "Penthouse", is as outrageous as it is absurd.

In interpreting the 1959 Obscene Publications Acts, you were required to determine whether or not such publications, taken as a whole, would tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read or see them. Notwithstanding that a purely objective judgement in any such cases is, in my opinion and that of countless far wiser heads than mine, quite impossible, you saw fit, in your infinite wisdom, to order the destruction of reproductions of works by Pablo Picasso, Aubrey Beardsley and other such eminent artists of acclaimed international repute.

The citizens of Exeter may thus have been deprived of such delights, but, for your information and, I trust, enlightenment, Londoners are still able to obtain copies of Mr. Gerhard's excellent book, quite openly, as I did only yesterday, and I am sure that both Mr. Gerhard and the bookshop where I purcahsed it will be most grateful to you and your colleagues, for affording the publication so much valuable free publicity and thereby substantially boosting its sales.

The kind of magisterial decision which you made in this case, bordering as it does on the lumatic, makes **étenvehearerst**ill, if that were possible, the urgent need for radical changes in the ridiculous, repressive and outmoded censorship laws in this country. We of the N.C.R.O.P.A. will militate, without quarter, for such changes relentlessly. We are having a personal meeting with the Home Secretary on 21st January to discuss just such changes. We shall certainly cite the case against Mr. Spokes as a classic example of the idiocy of the present legislation at that meeting. Meantime I am writing

to the Lord Chancellor to ask him if he will take steps to bring to an end idiosyncratic magisterial decisions in so-called "obscenity" cases, such as that in which you and your fellow members of the Bench have so unwisely adjudicated.

Yours sincerely,

David Webb,
Organiser,
National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts.

Who him of tendeterial designs - and you are to be that then, beneating as a few on the lambin, relate described annually, at the west samples, has arranged for partial chapter in the rightenians remarked to act money employed from the this executy, and a shall design with the sample of a shall design a substitute of the horizon with chapter morning that the bare few relatings of annual to increase just such chapters in shall certainly size the same value, by a special or and a chapter of the present importance of the present impore